

**Information Search, Retrieval and Distillation
Into Knowledge Objects**

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ABSTRACT

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The invention provides for various methods and apparatuses for searching bodies of knowledge, such as previously indexed source documents reachable over a network, search results from previous searches, and results from performing meta-searches. Search criteria is received from a client, and the bodies of knowledge are searched based on the search criteria, and search results provided responsive to said searching. Search results may be configured to have associated distillation triggers, where selecting a trigger causes its associated search result to be distilled in real-time. Distilled search results can be indexed into portions of the source document for focused entry, and can also be grouped and analytically presented on mid-menus to allow the user to review distilled data in summary form. Results may also have associated status symbols indicating by symbol a particular topic area to which a result is related, and by opacity or other indicator the apparent relevance of a result to the particular topic area. Search and viewing preferences may be determined according to psychometrics, user selection of a default user category, through a question/answer session, or based on monitoring user activity which incrementally defines a profile.